Weird, Spooky, Supernatural Stories

ACE

The BEYOND

AUGUST 10¢

"There's no such animal," he cried!

MY FRIEND and I were picking the ponies one day when I started telling him about a *sure thing* I heard about

"You say it pays four bucks for every three?" he asked.

"Yep" I replied

"And can't lose? It *automatically* wins? Must be illegal!"

"Not a bit" I replied. "In fact the government very much approves . . ."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose . . ."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse . . .?"

"It not only could be—but is—U S Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply "The surest thing running on any track today

"For every three dollars you invest in U S Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds *automatically* from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you re not looking Hey what are you doing?"

"Tearing up my racing form! The horse I'm betting on from now on is U S Savings Bonds!"

Automatic saving is sure saving—U.S. Savings Bonds

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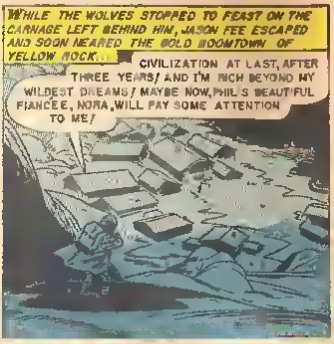
FANGED NEMESIS of the NORTH

IN THE FROZEN WASTELANDS OF ALASKA, LATE ONE GHOSTLY MOONLIT NIGHT, IRONIC FATE STEPPED IN AND PLAYED A HAND. TWO PROSPECTORS, JASON FEE AND PHIL LOOMIS HAD STRUCK IT RICH AND WERE ALMOST BACK TO CIVILIZATION, WHEN DEATH IN THE FORM OF VICIOUS, SLAVERING TIMBER WOLVES ATTACKED AND TRIED TO KEEP THEM FROM ENJOYING THE LUCK THEY'D BEEN COURTING FOR SO MANY YEARS. BUT, UNKNOWN TO EITHER ONE OF THEM, IN THIS DEATH-STRUGGLE BETWEEN MAN AND BEAST, DOOMFUL EVENTS FAR MORE HORRIBLE THAN LOSS OF LIFE, WERE INSIDIOUSLY FORMING...

HE MANAGED TO TURN AND SLASH ME AT THE LAST MINUTE, BUT IT'S ONLY A FLESH WOUND/ AND HERE COME SOME MORE KILLERS! THEY'LL DEVOUR PHIL'S CORPSE --LEAVE NOTHING BUT BONES, NOTHING TO BETRAY HOW HE DIED/ NOBODY WILL BE ABLE TO PROVE I KILLED HIM!
OWWRRRR

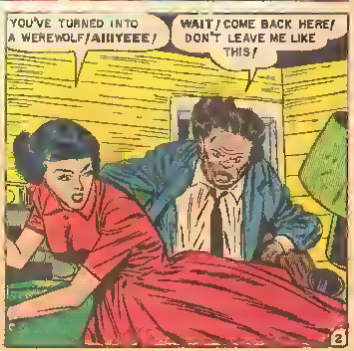

WHILE THE WOLVES STOPPED TO FEAST ON THE CARNAGE LEFT BEHIND HIM, JASON FEE ESCAPED AND SOON NEARED THE GOLD BOOMTOWN OF YELLOW ROCK...
CIVILIZATION AT LAST, AFTER THREE YEARS/ AND I'M RICH BEYOND MY WILDEST DREAMS/ MAYBE NOW, PHIL'S BEAUTIFUL FIANCÉE, NORA, WILL PAY SOME ATTENTION TO ME/

POOR PHIL/ THE WOLVES FINALLY GOT HIM/ I WAS LUCKY TO GET OUT ALIVE, MYSELF/
VERY LUCKY/ WE'LL GET OUT THERE AND EXAMINE THE REMAINS AND BRING THEM IN TOMORROW/

THE NEXT NIGHT...
EVERYTHING WORKED OUT PERFECTLY/ RANGERS DECLARED NO EVIDENCE OF FOUL PLAY IN PHIL'S DEATH AND I SOLD OUR MINE FOR A QUARTER MILLION/ NOW TO CALL ON THE BEAUTIFUL NORA AND REAP MY SECOND REWARD/

YOU'VE BEEN SO KIND, JASON/ I-I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT I FEEL ALMOST AS FOND OF YOU AS I WAS OF PHIL/ THREE YEARS AWAY FROM HIM WAS A LONG TIME/
OF COURSE, DARLING/ FORGET HIM COMPLETELY. YOU AND I WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER, ANYHOW/

JASON/ LOOK AT YOURSELF/ SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO YOU/ SOMETHING HORRIBLE/ YOU-YOU'RE CHANGING/
I-I DO FEEL SORT OF STRANGE I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND/


YOU'VE TURNED INTO A WEREWOLF/ AIIIIYEEE/
WAIT/ COME BACK HERE/ DON'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS/

NO MATTER WHAT I AM, WHAT I'VE BECOME, I—I COULDN'T HURT YOU, NORA / OR COULD I? I FEEL FILLED WITH STRANGE CRAVINGS MADDENING POWER / AND IF I LET YOU LIVE, YOU WILL BETRAY ME -- TELL WHAT I'VE BECOME /

MY -- MY THROAT / ARRRGGGH /

NORA'S MAID / GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE /

EEEEEEKKK /

A FEW MINUTES LATER, SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY...

THE SPELL IS GONE / I'VE CHANGED BACK TO HUMAN FORM AGAIN, NOW THAT THOSE MAD ANIMAL CRAVINGS HAVE BEEN SATISFIED / AND I—I HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR, REALLY / THE MAID COULDN'T HAVE RECOGNIZED ME IN THAT FORM /

IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED WHEN PHIL DASHED ME WITH HIS KNIFE, STILL WET AND RED WITH WOLF'S BLOOD / THE STUFF GOT INTO MY BLOOD-STREAM / BUT PERHAPS IT IS ONLY A TEMPORARY AFFLICTION AND WON'T OCCUR AGAIN /

WHEN A WEEK WENT BY WITHOUT ANY REDOCCURRENCE OF THE MACABRE CHANGE, JASON FEE WENT BACK TO ENJOYING HIS BLOOD-TAINTED WEALTH...

SPEND ALL YOU WANT, GALS / THERE'S PLENTY MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM /

WHAT A STORY YOU ARE, JASON / YOU MUST BE THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD /

THEN, A FEW MOMENTS LATER...

EEEYIIIEEE / LOOK AT JASON / HE—HE'S TURNING INTO SOME KIND OF FURRY BEAST /

WHAT ARE YOU ALL STARING AT, YOU FOOLS ?

I—I CAN'T HELP MYSELF / I MUST KILL /

HE HAS BECOME A WILD BEAST / A WERE-WOLF / DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE, OR NO ONE IN THE TOWN WILL BE SAFE /

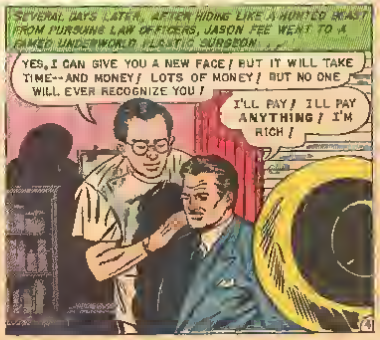
IT'S NO USE! A WEREWOLF IS IMMUNE TO ORDINARY METHODS OF KILLING!
GRROWWWWR!

AGAIN I CHANGED BACK TO HUMAN FORM AS SOON AS THE KILL WAS MADE! AND I GOT SAFELY BACK HERE TO MY HOTEL! BUT THEY KNOW NOW THAT I, JASON FEE, AM A WEREWOLF! THEY SAW ME CHANGE RIGHT BEFORE THEIR EYES!

A MOB STORMING THE HOTEL! I MUST FLEE!
SOMEWAY WE'LL RID THE TOWN OF THAT MURDEROUS HALF-BEAST JASON FEE! IF WE CAN'T KILL HIM ONE WAY, WE'LL TRY ANOTHER! RAID THE HOTEL, MEN!

THIS BLACK SHOE POLISH IS A CRUDE DISGUISE, BUT IT'S THE BEST I CAN DO! NOW, IF I CAN SLIP OUT THE REAR OF THE HOTEL, WHILE THAT MOB IS STORMING THE FRONT...

FOOLS! THEY'RE PAYING NO ATTENTION TO ME! I'LL MAKE IT, ALL RIGHT!
HE'S IN ROOM 405! UP THERE! FAST! HE HASN'T HAD TIME TO PACK AND LEAVE!


SEVERAL DAYS LATER, AFTER HIDING LIKE A HUNTED BEAST FROM PURSUING LAW OFFICERS, JASON FEE WENT TO A FAMED UNDERWORLD PLASTIC SURGEON...
YES, I CAN GIVE YOU A NEW FACE! BUT IT WILL TAKE TIME--AND MONEY! LOTS OF MONEY! BUT NO ONE WILL EVER RECOGNIZE YOU!
I'LL PAY! I'LL PAY ANYTHING! I'M RICH!

A FINE JOB, EVEN IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF! WELL WORTH $10,000! EVEN YOUR OWN MOTHER WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!
NOW I CAN START A NEW LIFE! THANK YOU, DOC!
THE NEW JASON FEE SETTLED DOWN IN A LARGE CITY AND WENT INTO BUSINESS. AS MONTHS WENT BY WITHOUT ANY FURTHER SIGN OF THE WEREWOLF CURSE, HE TOOK UP A NORMAL, USEFUL LIFE. THEN, ON THE DAY OF HIS MARRIAGE TO A GIRL HE HAD SWEPT OFF HER FEET IN A WHIRLWIND COURTSHIP...
SIR! LET'S HOLD UP THE CEREMONY A MOMENT! YOU LOOK ILL!
DON'T BE SILLY! JUST NERVOUS! GO AHEAD WITH THE WEDDING!
NO! SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH HIM! HE'S CHANGING INTO A - A THING THAT'S BESTIAL!
GO AHEAD AND STARE, YOU FOOLS! I CON'T CARE! I MUST GRATIFY THIS MACCENING HUNGER! YOU CAN'T STOP ME! GRRROWWRR!
HELP! HE'S BECOME A FURRY, FANGED BEAST!
STOP HIM! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
YOU CAN'T! I'M TOO POWERFUL, TOO CLEVER! BEYOND MERE HUMAN PUNISHMENT!
SOME DISTANCE AWAY...
AGAIN I ESCAPED AND REGAINED MY HUMAN FORM! BUT THIS CAN'T GO ON! I CANNOT CONTINUE TO LIVE HALF-MAN--HALF BEAST! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO RID MYSELF OF THIS CURSED DUAL EXISTENCE!
AND THE NEXT DAY, JASON THOUGHT HE HAD THE ANSWER...
FRANKLY, I THINK YOU ARE MAD, BUT I CAN PERFORM SUCH AN OPERATION, IF YOU INSIST! BUT IT WILL BE EVEN MORE EXPENSIVE THAN THE PLASTIC SURGERY!
I DON'T CARE! WITH MY SYSTEM ENTIRELY CLEANSED OF THIS WOLF-TAINTED BLOOD, PERHAPS I WILL ONCE AGAIN BE NORMAL! I MUST TRY IT, ANYHOW!

THIS DRAINING OUT OF ALL YOUR BLOOD AND REPLACING IT WITH NEW BLOOD IS DANGEROUS! IT COULD BE FATAL! BUT WITH A LITTLE LUCK
HURRY AND BEGIN! EVEN DYING WILL BE BETTER THAN WHAT I'VE BEEN THROUGH!
THE NEXT MORNING
I FEEL LIKE A NEW MAN! I'M CONFIDENT THAT DID THE TRICK, DOC! I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU FOR THIS!
THANKS! AND GOOD LUCK!
AND AS THE WEEKS PASSED, THE "NEW-BLOOD" CURE SEEMED TO HAVE WORKED. ONCE AGAIN JASON FEE BEGAN TO ENJOY EVERYDAY LIFE AND THE PLEASURE OF HIS REMAINING WEALTH
I—I FEEL STRANGELY AGAIN! FEEL THAT MADDENING, INHUMAN STRENGTH COMING OVER ME ONCE MORE! YES! IT IS HAPPENING! I'M NOT CURED!
AND AGAIN THE FANGED FURY OF THE WEREWOLF STRUCK!
HELP!
ARRRRGGH!
I—I CAN'T EVEN KILL MYSELF! I'VE TRIED! I'LL DO ANYTHING TO BE FREE OF THIS WEREWOLF CURSE! ANYTHING! I—WHO? W-W-WHAT???
IT'S YOUR OLD PARTNER PHIL, JASON! THERE IS A WAY YOU MAY HAVE PEACE! LISTEN!
GO TO THE POLICE AND CONFESS MY MURDER, JASON! TAKE YOUR PUNISHMENT LIKE A MAN, STAND TRIAL, SUFFER THE EXECUTION YOU DESERVE! I PROMISE YOU, IF YOU DO THAT, IT WILL WORK! YOU WILL THEN FINALLY ACQUIRE PEACE— IN DEATH!

JASON FEE, IN DESPERATION TOOK THE SHEETER'S ADVICE, WAS SHIPPED TO ALASKA, TRIED AND SENTENCED TO DEATH. THEN ONE NIGHT...

STEP LIVELY, MEN! NO TALKING ON WAY TO MESS HALL!

PSSSST! HEY, JASON, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU? YOU LOOK DIFFERENT! YOUR HAIR IS GETTING LONG AND SHAGGY!

IT'S JASON FEE! I NEVER BELIEVED THOSE CRAZY YARNS OF HIS, BUT LOOK! HE IS WEREWOLF!

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE COULD LIVE THROUGH SUCH A HAIL OF BULLETS! YET HE'S GETTING AWAY!

THIS TIME, EVEN AFTER I SATISFIED MY WERE-WOLF URGES, I DIDN'T CHANGE BACK TO HUMAN FORM! BUT I DON'T CARE ANYMORE, IF I NEVER CHANGE AGAIN! AND THOSE POSSES HUNTING FOR ME WILL NEVER FIND ME, HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS!

THE REAL OWNERS OF THIS CAVE RETURNED! THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM! CAN'T FIGHT THEM OFF MUCH LONGER! STOP, YOU STUPID CREATURES! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M ALMOST ONE OF YOU!

GRRRRR!

GOT TO ESCAPE FROM THOSE MURDEROUS BEASTS! EEEEYAH! RIGHT INTO THE HANDS OF A POSSE!

I TOLD YOU I HEARD SOUNDS FROM THAT CAVE! GRAB HIM!

ACCORDING TO AN INDIAN LEGEND, A WEREWOLF CAN BE KILLED WITH A SPLINTERED BONE FROM A REAL WOLF! WE SHALL SEE!

MY HEART! OWWW!

THAT GRUESOME WEAPON DID THE TRICK, ALL RIGHT! HE'S NOT ONLY DEAD, BUT RETURNED TO THE SAME FORM IN WHICH WE KNEW HIM BEFORE HIS PLASTIC SURGERY!

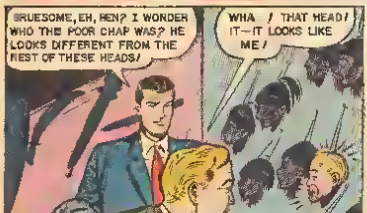
NOW I KNOW THAT THERE ARE SOME THINGS BEYOND HUMAN EXPLANATION!

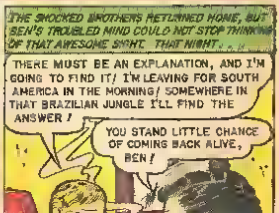
THE END

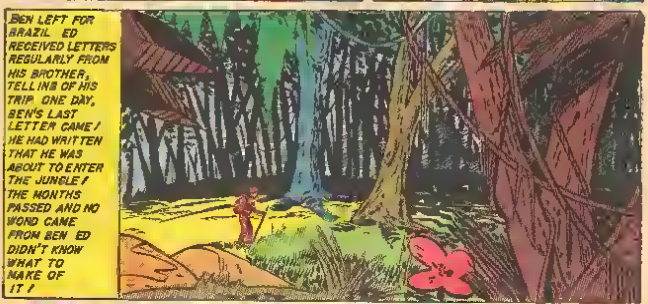
TRUE TALES of the SUPERNATURAL

#27

IN A MOST FORBIDDING PART OF THE BRAZILIAN JUNGLE, THERE EXISTS A SAVAGE TRIBE OF HEADHUNTERS. FEW CIVILIZED MEN HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH THESE SAVAGES, BUT EVERY SO OFTEN A SAMPLE OF THEIR DEADLY HANDIWORK FINDS ITS WAY TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD IN THE FORM OF A SHRUNKEN HUMAN HEAD! ONE DAY, IN A NEW YORK MUSEUM, TWO BROTHERS STOPPED TO LOOK AT A WEIRD EXHIBIT OF SHRUNKEN HEADS





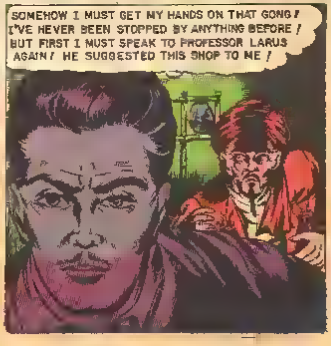


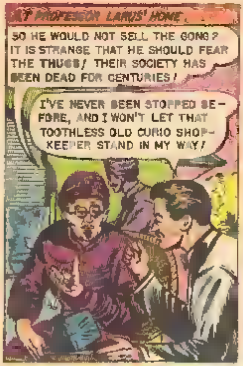
The GONG of SINGH CHLAM

THAT STRANGE GONG IS THE ONLY THING I WANT! THE OTHER STUFF YOU HAVE HERE IS ALL JUNK! WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR IT? NAME YOUR PRICE--MONEY IS NO OBJECT!

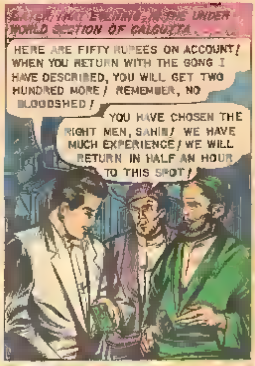
I AM SORRY. IT IS NOT FOR SALE! THE GONG WAS LEFT IN MY KEEPING MANY YEARS AGO BY A GREAT FAKIR! IT IS A TENTH CENTURY THUGGEE TEMPLE GONG VERY SACRED ONLY THE GREAT FAKIR CAN CLAIM IT!

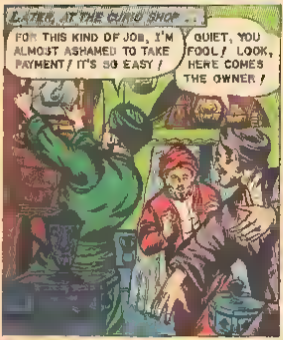
IN ANCIENT INDIA, THE THUGGEE SOCIETY WAS ONCE A RELIGIOUS GROUP OF HIGH ORDER. BUT IT STRANGELY ATTRACTED A LARGE NUMBER OF OUTCASTS OF SOCIETY--MURDERERS AND THIEVES--WHO SOON COMMITTED THEIR EVIL, MONSTROUS CRIMES IN THE NAME OF THE THUG GOD, SHIVA CHLAM. ANGERED BY THE INIQUITIES OF HIS FOLLOWERS, THE GOD WREAKED HAVOC AMONG THE THUGS, AND FROZE THEM, AMIDST THEIR ACTIONS, INTO PERPETUAL IMMOBILITY. AND THE WEIRD TEMPLE GONG, THE SOURCE OF THUGGEE POWER, WAS HIDDEN AWAY BY LOYAL FOLLOWERS AND WELL GUARDED. WHEN RALPH BURGESS, YOUNG AMERICAN COLLECTOR LOOKING FOR PRECIOUS RELICS OF ORIENTAL CIVILIZATION, ENTERED AN INDIAN CURIO SHOP, HE WAS UNAWARE THAT HIS UNCOW PRONOUNCE COLLECTOR'S ZEAL WAS ABOUT TO UNLOCK A CURSE SEALED CENTURIES AGO...




AT PROFESSOR LARIS' HOME...
SO HE WOULD NOT SELL THE GONG? IT IS STRANGE THAT HE SHOULD FEAR THE THUGGS! THEIR SOCIETY HAS BEEN DEAD FOR CENTURIES!
I'VE NEVER BEEN STOPPED BEFORE, AND I WON'T LET THAT TOOTHLESS OLD CURIO SHOPKEEPER STAND IN MY WAY!

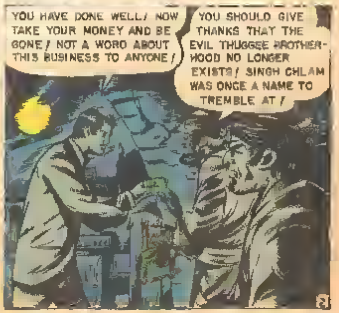
RALPH BURGESS WILL GET WHAT HE IS AFTER! THE FOOL DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE IS GETTING IN MOTION WITH HIS WILD DESIRES!


LATER, THAT EVENING, IN THE UNDER WORLD SECTION OF CALCUTTA...
HERE ARE FIFTY RUPEES ON ACCOUNT! WHEN YOU RETURN WITH THE GONG I HAVE DESCRIBED, YOU WILL GET TWO HUNDRED MORE! REMEMBER, NO BLOODSHED!
YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE RIGHT MEN, SAHIB! WE HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE! WE WILL RETURN IN HALF AN HOUR TO THIS SPOT!


LATER, AT THE CURIO SHOP...
FOR THIS KIND OF JOB, I'M ALMOST ASHAMED TO TAKE PAYMENT! IT'S SO EASY!
QUIET, YOU FOOL! LOOK, HERE COMES THE OWNER!

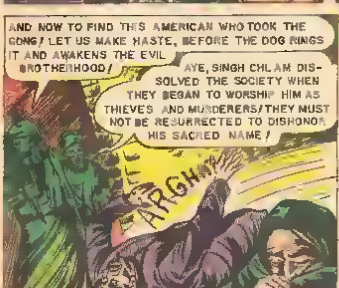
BY SHIVA, THE OLD MAN IS STRONG! RUN, WHILE I HOLD HIM! I WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY!
DON'T TAKE THAT GONG! IT IS SACRED TO SINGH CHLAM, THE THUGGEE GOD! YOU DOGS WILL BE DESTROYED!

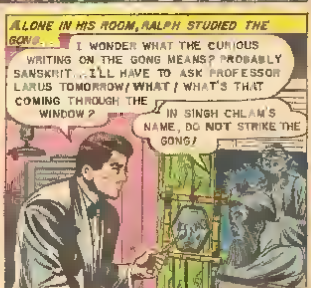
MOMENTS LATER...
IF I HAD KNOWN WHOSE GONG IT WAS, I WOULD NEVER HAVE TOUCHED THIS JOB!
AAAII, SINGH CHLAM IT MAKES ME SHIVER! IT IS TOO LATE NOW! LET US COLLECT OUR MONEY AND WASH OUR HANDS OF IT!


YOU HAVE DONE WELL! NOW TAKE YOUR MONEY AND BE GONE! NOT A WORD ABOUT THIS BUSINESS TO ANYONE!
YOU SHOULD GIVE THANKS THAT THE EVIL THUGGEE BROTHERHOOD NO LONGER EXISTS! SINGH CHLAM WAS ONCE A NAME TO TREMBLE AT!

AS THE THIEVES WENT OFF TO SPEND THEIR ILL-GOTTEN RUPEES, SUDDENLY
WH-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
THE GONG YOU WRETCHED THIEVES! SINGH CHLAM HAS SENT US FOR THE GONG!

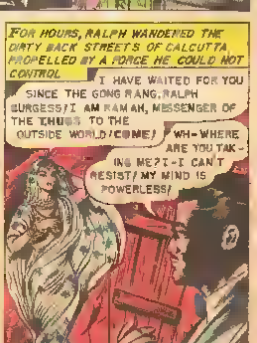
WE GAVE IT TO AN AMERICAN! WE DID NOT KNOW IT BELONGED TO SINGH CHLAM! MERCY! SPARE US!
BITE, YOU UNCLEAN BEASTS--DESECRATORS OF THE SACRED TEMPLE!


AND NOW TO FIND THIS AMERICAN WHO TOOK THE GONG! LET US MAKE HASTE, BEFORE THE DOG RINGS IT AND AWAKENS THE EVIL
AYE, SINGH CHLAM DISBROTHERHOOD! SOLVED THE SOCIETY WHEN THEY BEGAN TO WORSHIP HIM AS THIEVES AND MURDERERS! THEY MUST NOT BE RESURRECTED TO DISHONOR HIS SACRED NAME!
ARGH!


ALONE IN HIS ROOM, RALPH STUDIED THE GONG...
I WONDER WHAT THE CURIOUS WRITING ON THE GONG MEANS? PROBABLY SANSKRIT...I'LL HAVE TO ASK PROFESSOR LARUS TOMORROW! WHAT! WHAT'S THAT COMING THROUGH THE WINDOW?
IN SINGH CHLAM'S NAME, DO NOT STRIKE THE GONG!

THE GONG PENETRATES MY BRAIN! A STRANGE FORCE IS TEARING AT ME! LOOK WHAT IT HAS DONE TO THOSE GRUESOME NATIVES!

I MUST LEAVE! THAT AWFUL SOUND! SOMETHING IS DRAWING ME LIKE A MAGNET INTO THE STREET!


FOR HOURS, RALPH WANDERED THE DIRTY BACK STREETS OF CALCUTTA PROPELLED BY A FORCE HE COULD NOT CONTROL
I HAVE WAITED FOR YOU SINCE THE GONG RANG, RALPH BURGESS! I AM RAMAH, MESSENGER OF THE THUGS TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! (COME!)
WH-WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?! - I CAN'T RESIST! MY MIND IS POWERLESS!

RALPH WAS LED THROUGH A MAZE OF DARK, UNDERGROUND PASSAGES, UNTIL...

OPEN, IN THE NAME OF SINGH CHLAM! I HAVE THE FOREIGNER WHO REVIVED OUR SOCIETY! THE MASTER WILL SOON BE HERE!

ENTER, AND SINGH CHLAM BE PRAISED!

HO, OUR LIBERATOR IS HERE! WE WANT YOU TO BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR THUGEE SOCIETY! DID YOU BRING THE GONG?

N-NO, I DID NOT BRING THE GONG! BUT YOU'RE ALL NOT HUMAN! LET ME GO! I DON'T WANT TO JOIN YOUR HORRIBLE ORGANIZATION!

DID YOU HEAR THAT, BROTHERS? THE DOG THINKS HE'S TOO GOOD TO JOIN OUR SACRED GROUP! THEN LET HIM BE A SACRIFICE TO SINGH CHLAM'S FOUR KNIVES, WHEN THE MASTER ARRIVES!

A SACRIFICE! LET'S PLAY FOR HIM TO SEE WHO SHALL HAVE THE HONOR OF PLACING HIM IN SINGH CHLAM'S LAP!

RALPH WAS FLUNG UPON THE TABLE AS A PAWN FOR THEIR GAMBLING FRENZY...

IT IS MY TURN! TEN! I HAVE WON! THE SACRIFICE IS MINE!

NO! YOU LIE! IT WAS A MISCAST! WE MUST TRY AGAIN! UNHAND THE DICE!

I LIE? YOU DEVIL'S SPAWN! I'LL HAVE YOUR BLOOD!

THEY'RE ALL EMBROILED IN THIS FIGHT! NOW'S MY CHANCE TO ESCAPE THIS MURDEROUS LOT!

RALPH FLED MUTE THE UNGUARDED DOOR, DOWN DARK CORRIDORS, UNTIL...

I FEEL MY LUNGS ARE GOING TO BURST! (PANT) BUT I'VE ESCAPED! WH-WHAT'S THAT? WHO'S CALLING MY NAME?

RALPH BURGESS! LISTEN TO A VOICE OF PROPHECY! LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE MASTER!

YOU HAVE ESCAPED THE THUGGEE BROTHERHOOD NOW/ BUT UNTIL THE GONG IS RETURNED, YOUR LIFE HANGS BY A THREAD/ NO MATTER WHERE YOU FLEE, YOU SHALL FINALLY BE DESTROYED/

THAT VOICE... IT SOUNDS STRANGELY FAMILIAR/ BUT I CAN'T STOP NOW/ I MUST GET BACK TO MY ROOM AND LEAVE CALCUTTA/

A SHORT TIME LATER...

SOON THE MENACE OF THIS GONG WILL BE FAR BEHIND ME/ MY BOAT LEAVES FOR SAN FRANCISCO TOMORROW/ THE CURSED THUGS WILL HAVE NO POWER OVER ME, THERE/

AS RALPH BOARDED THE OCEAN LINER, THE FOLLOWING MORNING

WHA...? IT'S RAMAH, THE THUG MESSENGER/ ON THIS BOAT/ THEY'RE AFTER ME/ I MUST TELL THE CAPTAIN AT ONCE/

BUT I TELL YOU THAT GIRL IS AN AGENT OF THE THUGS/ MY LIFE IS IN DANGER/ YOU MUST DO SOMETHING, CAPTAIN/

THUGS? REALLY NOW, YOU MUST BE MAD/ THAT WOMAN IS THE DAUGHTER OF THE INDIAN CONSUL IN SAN FRANCISCO/

AS RALPH WANDERED ALONG THE DECK, ILL AT EASE...

PROFESSOR LARUS/ I'M VERY HAPPY TO SEE YOU/ WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON THIS SHIP?

I'M DOING A LECTURE TOUR IN THE STATES ON IND IAN PHILOSOPHY/ TELL ME, BURGESS, DID YOU GET THE GONG AFTER ALL?

IN ANSWER, RALPH LED HIM TO HIS STATEROOM...

YES, THIS IS CERTAINLY AUTHENTIC/ THE WRITING HERE IS SANSKRIT AND VERY OLD/ IT SAYS: "I AM THE THUGGEE SOURCE OF POWER. THE GONG OF SINGH CHLAM/ TO BE DESTROYED, I MUST BE MELTED DOWN/"

I HOPE I NEVER HAVE TO MELT IT DOWN/ IT SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH TO RING IT IN SAN FRANCISCO/

SOME DAYS LATER, AS RALPH STROLLED THE DECK...

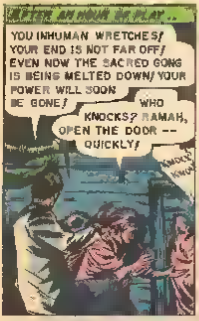
MR. BURGESS, THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO WISH TO SEE YOU DOWN THERE/ THEY ARE WAITING FOR YOU/

WHY DO YOU PURSUE ME? LEAVE ME ALONE, GO AWAY/

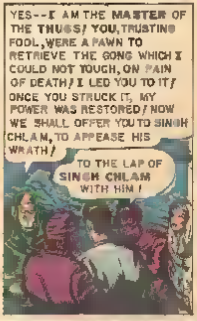
BUT, DRIVEN BY A FORCE GREATER THAN HE COULD CONQUER, RALPH WENT TO THE DOOR...
THE GONG! THE GONG! GIVE US BACK OUR GONG! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE SINGH CHLAM! HA HA HA HA!
AAAIII! THE THUGS ON THIS SHIP! HELP!
WHAT'S ALL THE SCREAMING ABOUT? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN THE DEVIL!
HELP! THEY'RE FOLLOWING ME ACROSS THE SEA! THE THUGS WANT TO SACRIFICE ME!
ESCORTED BY THE OFFICER TO THE HOLD BELOW...
THEY WERE HERE WITH THEIR NASTY, GRINNING, DECOMPOSED FACES! THEY'RE NOT HUMAN! I TELL YOU, I DID SEE THEM!
NOW LOOK HERE, MR. BURGESS, YOU'RE GETTING HYSTERICAL! THERE'S NO ONE HERE BUT THE STOKERS! ANOTHER INCIDENT, AND YOU'LL BE CONFINED TO YOUR CABIN!
WHEN THE SHIP FINALLY ARRIVED IN SAN FRANCISCO...
I'M GLAD YOU INVITED ME TO YOUR HOME, PROFESSOR LARUS! I WOULD BE AFRAID TO STAY IN SAN FRANCISCO ALONE!
NONSENSE--THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR, ONCE YOU'RE OFF THE SHIP! WE'LL TEST THE POWER OF THE GONG IN MY APARTMENT!
LATER...
REMEMBER, PROFESSOR, IF THE GONG'S VIBRATIONS COMPELL ME TO LEAVE THE HOUSE, YOU MUST MELT IT DOWN TO DESTROY THE THUGS' POWER OVER ME!
I WILL MELT IT DOWN! DO NOT FEAR!
NO! IT'S COME AGAIN! THE SOUND RIPS AT MY MIND! I MUST GO OUT! I MUST!
THEN GO! I SHALL SEE YOU AGAIN... SOON!
THROUGH THE NARROW, DIMLY LIT STREETS OF THE ORIENTAL QUARTER OF SAN FRANCISCO, RALPH STAGGERED, UNTIL...
YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
COME--I HAVE WAITED LONG! THIS TIME YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE!

RAMAH LED THE PRISONER A DARK MAZE WINDING PASSAGES ...
BEHOLD! I HAVE RETURNED WITH OUR ESCAPED SACRIFICE! THE MASTER WILL ARRIVE SOON!
HO! MAKE WAY! SEIZE THE INFIDEL!

LET US PLAY ONCE MORE, FOR THIS UNBELIEVING DOG! IT WILL BE AN HONOR TO SACRIFICE HIM FOR THE MASTER!


...AFTER AN HOUR OF PLAY ...
YOU INHUMAN WRETCHES! YOUR END IS NOT FAR OFF! EVEN NOW THE SACRED GONG IS BEING MELTED DOWN! YOUR POWER WILL SOON BE GONE!
WHO KNOCKS? RAMAH, OPEN THE DOOR -- QUICKLY!
KNOCK KNOCK

THE MASTER HAS COME, AND HE BEARS THE SACRED GONG! ALL HAIL TO THE MASTER!
PROFESSOR LARUS! I'VE BEEN TRICKED! MY ONLY ESCAPE HAS BEEN CUT OFF! DOOMH!

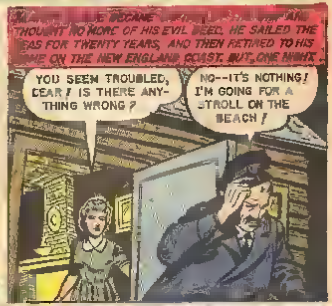

YES--I AM THE MASTER OF THE THUGS! YOU, TRUSTING FOOL, WERE A PAWN TO RETRIEVE THE GONG WHICH I COULD NOT TOUCH, ON PAIN OF DEATH! I LED YOU TO IT! ONCE YOU STRUCK IT, MY POWER WAS RESTORED! NOW WE SHALL OFFER YOU TO SINGH CHLAM, TO APPEASE HIS WRATH!
TO THE LAP OF SINGH CHLAM WITH HIM!

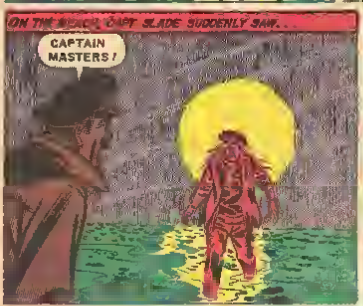
LET THE SACRIFICIAL KNIVES DESCEND! OUR GOD THIRSTS FOR BLOOD! STRIKE THE GONG!
NO! NO! LET ME GO!

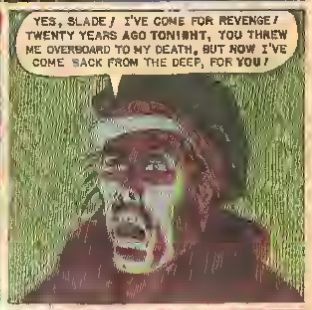
LONG LIVE THE BROTHERHOOD OF THUGGEE! SINGH CHLAM'S WILL IS DONE!
YAIEEEEE!
THE END

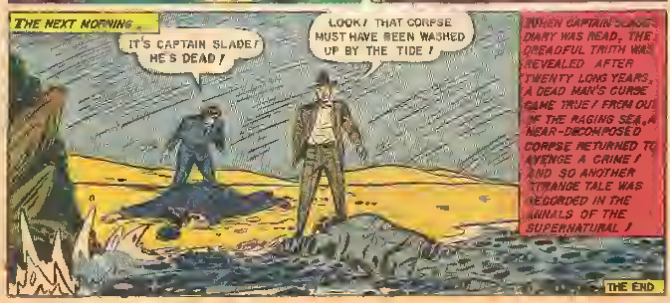
TRUE TALES of the SUPERNATURAL

THE SEVEN SEAS OF THE WORLD HIDE MANY SECRETS AND MYSTERIES. AT TIMES THE SEA GIVES UP ITS SECRETS IN A STRANGE MANNER. HERE IS THE STORY OF A NEW ENGLAND SEA CAPTAIN WHO COULD NOT HIDE FROM THESE STRANGE POWERS IN 1903, FIRST MATE MARTIN SLADE SAILED ON A VESSEL IN THE LONTH ATLANTIC. ON BOARD THE SHIP, A BATTLE WAS TAKING PLACE...





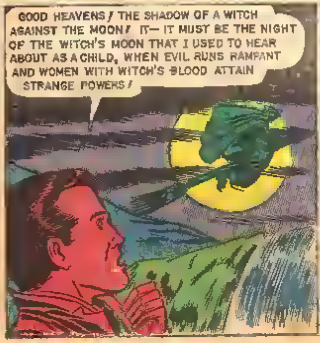


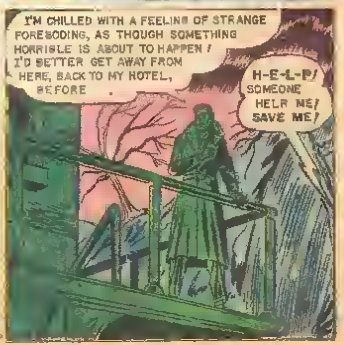


Wedded to a WITCH

EVEN MY IMAGINATION IS PLAYING TRICKS ON ME, TONIGHT! I SWEAR THAT THE ICE FORMATIONS OF THE FROZEN FALLS SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN THE SHAPE OF WEIRD AND DEMONIC OTHER WORLD CREATURES!

ONE NIGHT, WHILE STOPPING OFF AT A HOTEL IN NIAGARA FALLS, YOUNG SALESMAN SID LEONARD FOUND THAT HE COULDN'T SLEEP. HE WAS FILLED WITH A STRANGE FEELING OF DEPRESSION AND UNEASINESS. HOPING THAT THE FRIGID WINTER NIGHT AIR WOULD CLEAR HIS HEAD AND ENABLE HIM TO SLEEP, HE WALKED OVER TO LOOK UPON THE FROZEN SPLENDOR OF THE FAMOUS FALLS. . .

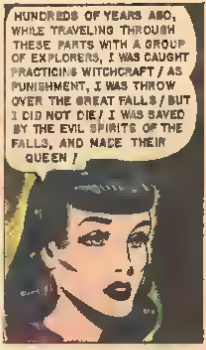


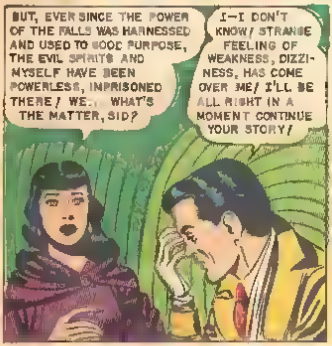


BUT AS SID LEONARD TURNED TO LEAVE, THE VOICE RISING EERILY FROM THE FROZEN FALLS BROUGHT HIM RUSHING BACK, TO SEE...
A GIRL! FROZEN INTO THAT HUGE ICICLE! IT—IT'S SHE WHO'S CALLING! HOW DID SHE GET THERE? WHO IS SHE?
PLEASE HELP ME! OOOOOOH!
THESE RIDGES FORMED INTO THE ICE ARE JUST LIKE STEPS! OTHERWISE I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO GET TO HER
HURRY! HURRY!
I CAN'T GET THE ICICLE FREE—CAN'T BREAK IT OFF!
SMASH IT! DON'T BE AFRAID OF HURTING ME! BREAK THE ICE OPEN!
THERE! THAT DOES IT!
THANK YOU! I'M FREE AT LAST! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
WH-WHAT? W-WHO'S THAT?
YOU ARE TRYING TO ESCAPE US, QUEEN ZOE! YOU CAN'T DO IT! YOU WILL NEVER GET AWAY FROM ME!
RUN! RUN! I CAN'T LET HIM GET ME! HE'LL KILL US BOTH!
HE'S GAINING! WE CAN'T MATCH HIS LONG STRIDES!
JUST AS THE MONSTROUSLY FIENDISH FIGURE FROM THE FALLS HAD SID AND THE GIRL IN HIS GRASP...
PART OF THE FALLS HAS BROKEN AWAY! HE'S BURIED IN AN AVALANCHE OF ICE!
WE'RE SAVED! WE CAN ESCAPE HIM, NOW!

NOW THAT WE'RE AWAY FROM THE FALLS AFTER ESCAPING FROM THAT HIDEOUS FIEND, I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE ANY OF THAT REALLY HAPPENED! HE CALLED YOU QUEEN ZOE! WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU GET THERE?
I'LL TELL YOU WHILE WE'RE DRINKING OUR COFFEE!

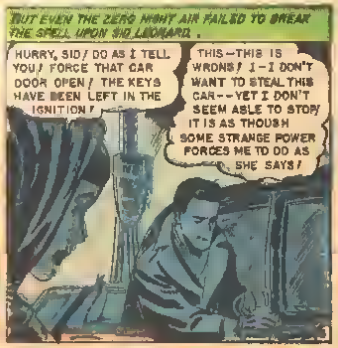
WAITRESS! YOU FORGOT TO BRING ME A SPOON!
THIS HYPNOTIC PELLET WILL MAKE HIM WILL-LESS AND PUT HIM COMPLETELY UNDER MY SPELL!


HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, WHILE TRAVELING THROUGH THESE PARTS WITH A GROUP OF EXPLORERS, I WAS CAUGHT PRACTICING WITCHCRAFT! AS PUNISHMENT, I WAS THROWN OVER THE GREAT FALLS! BUT I DID NOT DIE! I WAS SAVED BY THE EVIL SPIRITS OF THE FALLS, AND MADE THEIR QUEEN!


BUT, EVER SINCE THE POWER OF THE FALLS WAS HARNESSED AND USED TO GOOD PURPOSE, THE EVIL SPIRITS AND MYSELF HAVE BEEN POWERLESS, IMPRISONED THERE! WE... WHAT'S THE MATTER, SID?
I—I DON'T KNOW! STRANGE FEELING OF WEAKNESS, DIZZINESS, HAS COME OVER ME! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT IN A MOMENT CONTINUE YOUR STORY!

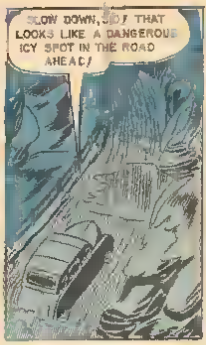
WELL, TONIGHT, THE EVE OF THE WITCH'S MOON, I CAN BE SAVED, IF THE MAN WHO FREED ME FROM THE FALLS, WILL ALSO MARRY ME! SO SAYS THE WITCH'S LEGEND! BUT WE MUST BE WED BEFORE DAWN!
WHAT? NO! IF YOU ARE TRULY A WITCH, I CAN'T POSSIBLY MARRY YOU!

YOU ARE A WITCH! AND YOU'VE WOVEN SOME KIND OF SPELL OVER ME! I—I FEEL SO STRANGE! MUST GET AIR!
THE HYPNOTIC PELLET I DROPPED IN HIS COFFEE IS WORKING!
COME! I'LL HELP YOU OUTSIDE!

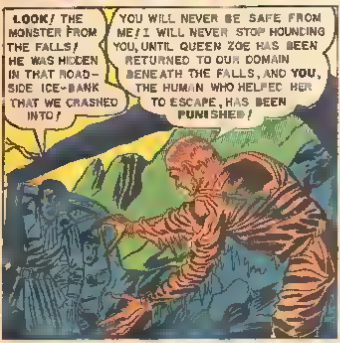

BUT EVEN THE ZERO NIGHT AIR FAILED TO BREAK THE SPELL UPON SID LEONARD.
HURRY, SID! DO AS I TELL YOU! FORCE THAT CAR DOOR OPEN! THE KEYS HAVE BEEN LEFT IN THE IGNITION!
THIS—THIS IS WRONG! I—I DON'T WANT TO STEAL THIS CAR—YET I DON'T SEEM ABLE TO STOP! IT IS AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE POWER FORCES ME TO DO AS SHE SAYS!

ABOUT 50 MILES OUT, ON THIS HIGHWAY, THERE IS A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE WHO WILL MARRY US IMMEDIATELY! FASTER, SID! WE MUST GET THERE BEFORE DAWN!
Y-YES, ZOE! WHATEVER YOU SAY! BUT WHY MUST WE GET THERE BEFORE DAWN?
ACCORDING TO THE WITCH'S LEGEND, IF I DON'T MARRY MY RESCUER BEFORE THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAY, I WILL BECOME OLDER AND OLDER, TURN INTO A HIDEOUS HAG, THEN FINALLY DECOMPOSE AND DISINTEGRATE INTO NOTHINGNESS!
A HALF HOUR LATER, AS THE FIRST STREAKS OF DAWN BROKE THE DARKNESS . . .
IT—IT'S TRUE! SHE'S ALREADY STARTED TO AGE! I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH THIS! I'LL WRECK THE CAR, OR JUMP OUT, OR . . .
KEEP DRIVING, SID! DON'T TRY ANY FOOLISH TRICKS!
SHE'S AGING YEARS WITH EVERY MINUTE, NOW! UGH! SOON I'LL BE MARRIED TO THIS EVIL, FOUL CREATURE! AND I—I CANNOT PREVENT IT! I HAVE NO STRENGTH OF WILL LEFT!
HERE AT LAST! HURRY, SID, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
A FEW MINUTES LATER, AS EVEN THE JUSTICE WAS APPALLED AT ZOE'S FAST AGING UGLINESS, THEY WERE MARRIED . . .
. . . AND I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!
AH! IT'S DONE AT LAST! I'M SAVED!
MUST BE LOSING MY SENSES! COULD HAVE SWORN THAT UGLY OLD BRIDE WAS GETTING YOUNGER BY AT LEAST TWENTY YEARS, AS THEY LEFT HERE!
YOU—YOU'VE BECOME YOUNG AGAIN, ZOE! JUST AS YOU WERE WHEN I RESCUED YOU FROM THE FALLS!
YES! THE LEGEND OF THE WITCHES HAS PROVED TRUE!

THE POWER OF THAT POTION WILL BE WEARING OFF SOON, AND YOU WILL BE FREE TO GET AWAY FROM ME, IF YOU SO DESIRE!
I - I'M NOT SO SURE THAT I WANT TO, NOW, ZOE! YOU ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE I'VE EVER SEEN! AND YOU BELONG TO ME, NOW! YOU'RE MY WIFE!


SLOW DOWN, SID! THAT LOOKS LIKE A DANGEROUS ICY SPOT IN THE ROAD AHEAD!

HOLD TIGHT, ZOE! WE'RE IN A SKID! CAR'S OUT OF CONTROL!
EEYIIEE!


LOOK! THE MONSTER FROM THE FALLS! HE WAS HIDDEN IN THAT ROAD-SIDE ICE-BANK THAT WE CRASHED INTO!
YOU WILL NEVER BE SAFE FROM ME! I WILL NEVER STOP HOUNDING YOU, UNTIL QUEEN ZOE HAS BEEN RETURNED TO OUR DOMAIN BENEATH THE FALLS, AND YOU, THE HUMAN WHO HELPED HER TO ESCAPE, HAS BEEN PUNISHED!

KEEP RUNNING, SID! HE WON'T LAST LONG IN THIS BRIGHT SUNLIGHT! HE CAN ONLY LIVE WHERE IT IS WET AND COLD!
BUT, HE'S (PUFF-PUFF!) GAINING ON US!

HE'S FINISHED! THAT DRIVER MUST'VE BEEN BLINDED BY THE SUN AND DIDN'T SEE THE MONSTER!
YES! WE'RE SAFE AGAIN, FOR AWHILE! BUT WE'D BETTER GET OFF THIS ROAD! THE POLICE WILL FIND OUR WRECKED CAR, LEARN IT WAS STOLEN AND START HUNTING FOR US!

A FEW WEEKS LATER, AFTER SID AND ZOE HAD SETTLED DOWN IN A HOME OF THEIR OWN AND SID HAD RETURNED TO HIS SALES JOB WITH A SMALL MANUFACTURER.
ZOE! I TOLD YOU YOU'VE BEEN BRINGING ME LUCK! GUESS WHAT HAPPENED TODAY? THE BOSS MADE ME A FULL PARTNER IN THE COMPANY, HE'S SO IMPRESSED WITH MY RECENT SALES RECORD! WE'LL SOON BE RICH, DARLING!
THAT'S WONDERFUL, SID!

DURING THAT YEAR, ZOE AND LEONARD'S FORTUNES ROSE HIGHER AND HIGHER. WITH THE PROFITS FROM HIS BUSINESS, SID INVESTED WISELY IN THE STOCK MARKET. HE SOON BECAME A WEALTHY AND INFLUENTIAL MAN. . .
BUT THEN A STRANGE THING BEGAN TO HAPPEN.
ZOE! LOOK AT ME! AM I IMAGINING THINGS, OR AM I AGING PREMATURELY? I DON'T EVEN LOOK LIKE MYSELF TONIGHT! I'M BEGINNING TO LOOK OLD, HAGGARD!
YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE TIRED! YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD!
AND A FEW WEEKS LATER . . .
ZOE, IT'S TRUE! I AM AGING RAPIDLY! IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS, I'VE AGED YEARS! SOMETHING'S TERRIBLY WRONG, ZOE!
NONSENSE! WHEN WE GET OUT TO THE CLUB AND YOU RELAX IN THE SUN FOR A FEW HOURS, YOU'LL FEEL BETTER!
I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT IS! THIS IS THE PENALTY I'M PAYING FOR MARRYING ZOE! IN GIVING HER BACK HER YOUTH, I'VE LOST MY OWN! I MARRIED AN EVIL CREATURE, A WITCH, AND NOW I'M PAYING THE PRICE!
WHY DOESN'T THAT FREIGHT TRAIN HURRY AND MOVE OUT OF THE WAY!
LOOK! FROM THAT REFRIGERATOR CAR! IT'S THE HEAD EVIL SPIRIT FROM THE FALLS! THE MASTER DEMON!
HE'S AFTER US AGAIN!
THEN, BEFORE EITHER SID OR ZOE COULD ESCAPE FROM THE CAR . . .
I TOLD YOU THERE WAS NO ESCAPE, QUEEN ZOE! I'M TAKING YOU BACK TO YOUR OWN KIND, IN OUR COLD AND WATERY REALM OF EVIL BELOW THE FALLS!
SID! GO BACK TO THE FALLS LATER AND RESCUE ME AGAIN! I'LL MAKE YOU YOUNG AGAIN! IT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN REGAIN YOUR YOUTH!
FIRST I LOSE ZOE AND NOW I COME HOME AND FIND OUR PALATIAL HOME A MASS OF FLAMES! WHAT ELSE CAN GO WRONG?

SID LEONARD FOUND THAT THE BURNING OF HIS HOME WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THE MISFORTUNE THAT PILED UPON HIM, WITH THE LOSS OF ZOE, IN A FEW WEEKS.
THE WORLD OF HIGH FINANCE WAS TOO MUCH FOR A SICK AND AGING MAN LIKE ME! MY JUDGMENT HAS FAILED ME! ONE WRONG INVESTMENT AFTER ANOTHER--- AND NOW I'M WIPED OUT, A PAUPER!
THE FALLS! ZOE SAID THAT IF I'D RESCUE HER AGAIN, I'D REGAIN MY YOUTH! I -I'VE GOT TO TRY IT! HEALTHY AND YOUNG AGAIN, PERHAPS I COULD BUILD ANOTHER FORTUNE! ESPECIALLY WITH HER BACK ONCE MORE! MY GOOD LUCK VANISHED WITH HER!
IT TOOK ME WEEKS TO HITCH-HIKE HERE, BUT I FINALLY MADE IT! I'D BETTER DESCEND THOSE STEPS FORMED IN THE ICE AND LOOK FOR SOME SIGN OF ZOE!
I -I'VE SLIPPED! I'M SLIDING RIGHT DOWN UNDER THE FALLS!
AT THE END OF HIS SLIDE, SID LEONARD FOUND HIMSELF IN A VAST CAVE UNDER THE FALLS, WHERE
ZOE! IT'S ME --YOUR HUSBAND, SID! I'VE COME BACK TO HELP YOU, ZOE!
NO HUMAN CAN ENTER OUR REALM AND LIVE! GET HIM!
ZOE! YOU DON'T EVEN SEEM TO HEAR ME! HELP ME! ZOE, THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME! ARRRRRGGGGHH!
A FEW MONTHS LATER, IN THE LOWER NIAGARA, FLOATED GRISLY EVIDENCE THAT SID LEONARD'S WITCH-WIFE, ZOE HAD KEPT HER PROMISE AND BROUGHT HIM BACK HIS YOUTH!
HEY, JOEY -- LOOK! IN THAT BIG CAKE OF ICE WE PULLED TO SHORE -- A DEAD GUY, A CORPSE!
WOW! WE BETTER TELL THE AUTHORITIES! MUST BE SOME GUY WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE IN THE FALLS!

THE SPECTER'S WARNING

Had it not been for his doctor's orders, Hugh Cavenaugh might never have walked along that lonely stretch of beach. But as it was, those words of warning still rang in Cavenaugh's ears that day.

It was exactly twelve o'clock when he finished dictating the morning's mail to his stenographer. "That will be all," he told her. As she left, Hugh stretched and turned toward the window. The workers at the Cavenaugh Shipbuilding Company had stopped for lunch, and they were hurrying toward the building. There was sunlight outside Hugh's office, and it looked as though it would be a warm day. He was about to turn back to his desk to continue working when he remembered what Doctor McCrary had warned. "Unless you slow down, Cavenaugh, I won't answer for the consequences. You're driving yourself, man. Let down a bit, get out in the air more."

Hugh Cavenaugh grinned wryly to himself. He supposed this was as good a time as any to start getting out more, but he knew that even though he'd go for that walk, he couldn't leave behind the worries that besieged him. He'd overreached himself, and he was heavily in debt. Then, too, there was that new ship he'd designed. He wanted desperately to build it, but there was no place left that he could beg, borrow or—yes, even steal the money, for he knew he'd consider that, too.

The sun was warm on his back as he left the building. It felt good, and lost in thought, Cavenaugh walked briskly. He headed out toward the beach and then along the coastline. Here and there a seagull skittered to the edge of the water and then flew away at his approach.

He didn't remember when he first noticed that the sun had disappeared. Suddenly he shivered, and he was aware that he had walked quite a distance. He was in a wild stretch of beach that he had never known existed. All along the water's edge wild weeds were growing in the sand, and they swished with a constant murmur in the wind that blew past them out to the gray ocean. There were no seagulls here, he noticed, and the air was filled with the sounds of the wild marsh grass and the breakers that seemed to roll in and crash against the beach with a frightening, living fury.

He wondered where he'd come, and then he saw the rocks that jutted in his path further along the way. He must be close to the Point, he thought, and he was suddenly very weary at how long a way he had walked. He decided he would go as far as the rocks and sit there and rest before he came away. But though he tried to hurry toward his destination, the distance seemed unbearably long. The wind had risen too, and he bent double as he hurried toward shelter.

Hugh Cavenaugh settled himself in the protection of a large boulder and marveled at the calm that he had found. Here there was no sound, either of wind or water, and it was as though he'd entered a cavern that was shut off from the sea. He shifted his feet, trying to get more comfortable, and it was then his shoe struck the object.

Idly he pushed more of the sand away, and he looked to see what he had found. It was an iron hinge such as would bind the sides of a chest, but it was ancient and covered with rust. His curiosity was aroused, and he continued excavating around the object. Then excitement came to him as the chest came into view. It was made of wood carefully fitted together by some master craftsman of a hundred years or more ago. Covered with the salt brine of countless washings, mussels clung to its warped sides.

Hugh Cavenaugh lifted the chest from its bed and tried to open it, but the lock resisted him. Unable to contain his excitement, he seized a rock and smashed it open. The lid fell back, and the jewels and stones that filled it to the brim glowed in the light with a living fire. Scarcely believing the treasure was real, Hugh shoved his hands into the casket and let the stones pour over his hands and through his fingers. Rubies, diamonds and emeralds caressed his skin as if with a promise of the wealth they'd bring him.

And it was then that Hugh Cavenaugh was suddenly aware he was not alone. He sensed rather than saw the thing that stood beside him, and his nostrils were assailed by a foul, dank odor that seemed to come from the disturbed, foul depths of the sea. He turned then and saw it, a hideous specter that stood casting its shadow over his treasure.

It seemed to Hugh that this was some hideous gargoyle of a man. It was dressed in tatters that were wringing wet, and it dripped water on the sand as it stood there. It looked as though it had arisen from the slime of the ocean bottom, and he was repelled by the strange tiny sea creatures that writhed and

clung around the creature's rags

"Yield up the treasure," the specter said. It spoke in a voice that left no sound, but it seemed to pierce the core of Cavenaugh's brain. "Hugh Cavenaugh, give back to the sea what is not meant to be yours."

"I am the guardian of this treasure," the specter whispered. "It is cursed with the deaths of those who owned it and the pirates who first stole it. Yield up the treasure, for whoever uses it is cursed."

Even as he looked, the creature vanished. Hugh Cavenaugh stared at the spot where he'd thought it stood, and there was nothing there. Even the sand upon which it had dripped water bore no sign, and it was as though Hugh Cavenaugh had imagined it all. But then he looked down at his hands. They were still buried in the chest of jewels. He fingered a ruby for a moment, and it was warm and glowing and real.

Hugh Cavenaugh was not a man to believe in the power of a specter's curse. All he could think of was the ship he would build, as he took the precious chest with him. By the laws of salvage along this New England coast that once was visited by pirates, he knew that the treasure he'd found belonged to him. That evening he reported his find, and the newspapers were full of his good fortune.

"The little man who came to see him" claimed it was because he'd read about the jewels in the papers. "I am prepared to pay any amount you ask for this treasure," he said. He seemed an ordinary little man, but when Hugh Cavenaugh looked into his eyes it seemed as though he were peering suddenly into darkness, as though there were no end to the hidden mysteries that lay there.

But then the man extended his card, and it was from a well known and reputable jewelry firm. Hugh named an enormous price, and the man agreed. Somehow the transaction seemed hurried, as though it were something that must be gotten through quickly and Hugh was relieved when his visitor wrote out the check. Then Cavenaugh stood up and offered his hand to his visitor, but instead the little man placed the check in his extended palm and hurried out without saying good bye. As Hugh Cavenaugh stood there with the check in his hand and watched the door close behind his visitor, he was conscious for the first time of the dank, dead smell of ocean slime that seemed to fill his office.

But Hugh Cavenaugh was not a man to believe in specters and he hastened to build his ship. Each day he went to the docks to see the progress that had been made on it, and he was driven by a fury to have the ship completed and see it sail.

Finally the day arrived when the chief engineer walked into his office and gave him the welcome news. "It's finished now, sir," he said.

"Good!" Cavenaugh exclaimed. "Start hiring men immediately. I'm going to have the ship inspected." He went over the ship that afternoon, and it was evident that it was superior in construction to any vessel he'd built. It was then Hugh Cavenaugh made his decision to sail with it on its maiden voyage. He had named the ship the "S.S. Cavenaugh," and he himself would sail his namesake.

It was exactly six months from the day he'd first found the treasure that the "S.S. Cavenaugh" slipped slowly away from the docks. It was a warm, sunny Autumn day, with just enough snap in the air to churn little breakers on the water. Hugh Cavenaugh walked the deck of his ship and felt pride in having defied the specter's curse.

He had set a course for the ship to round the Point where he had found the treasure. As the bleak rocks on shore came into view, he went below for a drink to celebrate. And it was then that it happened.

A shudder ran through the ship as it struck some object, some hidden jagged rock that the shifting ocean bottom had displaced. It caught the ship in the middle, and the "S.S. Cavenaugh" broke in half. Seeking water poured through the foundered vessel, and the air was filled with the quick muffled cries of drowning men. Hugh Cavenaugh felt the water suck around him as he was pulled downward.

As the days passed the ocean yielded up the bodies of the ill fated men until all were accounted for but Hugh Cavenaugh. Although the waters around the Point were plumbed, there was no sign of him and finally it was assumed he'd been washed out to sea.

When his office files were examined, it was apparent that Cavenaugh's affairs were in good order, and a new president of the company was elected. Memorial services were held for Hugh Cavenaugh, and it was on that day that the new president took over Cavenaugh's office that had been made ready for his occupancy the day before.

He opened the door that morning and found that Hugh Cavenaugh had returned. He was seated behind his desk, his drowned, bloated face looking sightlessly toward the door. Little wisps of sea weed from the bottom of the ocean still clung to his person. And clutched in his long-dead hand was a tiny model of the "S.S. Cavenaugh," perfect in every detail.

THE END

SATANA'S FATAL Beauty

I KNOW YOUR SECRET, AMELIA! YOU ARE HOMELY, AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE BEAUTIFUL! NO MAN HAS EVER LOOKED AT YOU WITH DESIRE! YOU HATE YOUR COUSIN, CHRISTINE, BECAUSE SHE IS VERY BEAUTIFUL -- AND BECAUSE SHE IS GOING TO MARRY HANDSOME JOHN MARSTON! YOU WOULD LIKE TO KILL CHRISTINE, BECAUSE YOU ARE IN LOVE WITH JOHN YOURSELF!

EVIL PERSONALITIES SEEM TO LEAVE THEIR MALEVOLENT INFLUENCES BEHIND THEM, WAITING FOR THOSE WEAK ENOUGH TO BE DOMINATED AND ENSLAVED BY THE DEMONIAC FORCES THEY REPRESENT. THIS IS THE STORY OF AMELIA KERR, WHO, UPON THE DEATH OF HER PARENTS, CAME TO A TOWN ON THE COAST OF MAINE TO LIVE WITH HER UNCLE AND HIS DAUGHTER, CHRISTINE.

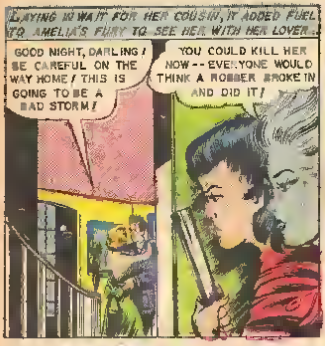
WHAT! WH-WHO ARE YOU? EVER SINCE I CAME HERE TO THIS HOUSE, I'VE FELT AS THOUGH SOMEONE WAS TALKING TO ME -- AND SAYING SUCH HORRIBLE THINGS!

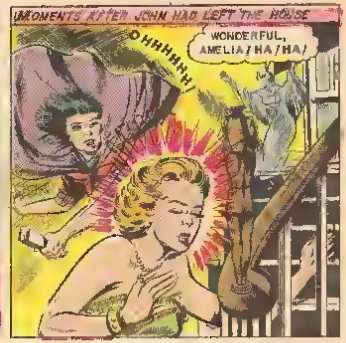
HA HA! YES, YOU WERE HEARING ME, AMELIA! I WAS ONLY SPEAKING YOUR OWN THOUGHTS! BUT THEY ARE MY THOUGHTS, TOO!

I LIVED IN THIS HOUSE ONCE! THEY CALLED ME SATANA! I CAN MAKE YOU BEAUTIFUL, AMELIA, IF YOU FOLLOW MY DIRECTIONS -- AND YOU WILL, AMELIA, YOU WILL!

WHAT SATANA WAS SAYING TO AMELIA WAS TOO STRONG TO RESIST.
OVER THERE, AMELIA--ON THE TOP SHELF--THAT BLACK BOOK / IN IT YOU WILL FIND A RECIPE FOR BEAUTY!
BEAUTY! HOW I'VE ALWAYS LONGED FOR IT!
I BOUGHT THAT RECIPE A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FROM A SEA CAPTAIN / HE HAD BROUGHT IT FROM ARABIA / BUT I NEVER PAID FOR IT / HE WAS THE ONE WHO PAID--WITH HIS LIFE / THAT'S THE WAY TO DO THINGS, AMELIA / TAKE WHAT YOU WANT!
THERE, AMELIA - SEE? JUST AS I WROTE IT / YOU MUST GRIND UP PEARLS, BELONGING TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN / BUT IT MUST BE MIXED WITH HER BLOOD AND STIRRED WITH A BONE FROM THE GRAVEYARD!
THEN, AS A STORM RAGES, YOU MUST TAKE IT TO THAT STONE ON THE CLIFF--THAT STONE THAT WAS MY ALTAR / SAY THOSE WORDS THAT I HAVE WRITTEN, AND THEN, AS YOU WASH YOUR FACE WITH THE MIXTURE, MY FRIENDS AND I WILL JOIN YOU / YOU WILL SACRIFICE TO US--AND BEAUTY WILL BE YOURS!
WHERE WOULD I GET PEARLS, OR BLOOD? I - I COULDN'T!
NONSENSE! THE PEARLS JOHN MARSTON GAVE CHRISTINE! - STEAL THEM! CHRISTINE'S BLOOD--YOU CAN FIND A WAY! I ALWAYS DID!
YOU WILL HAVE BEAUTY! THEN YOU WILL HAVE JOHN MARSTON!
OH! OH! I - I CAN'T!
BUT WHEN AMELIA SAW HER COUSIN IN JOHN'S ARMS AGAIN, ALL HER HATE AND JEALOUSY FLAMED ANEW, AND SHE KNEW SHE WOULD DO SATANA'S BIDDING!
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE IN CHRISTINE'S PLACE? YOU CAN MAKE JOHN WANT TO BE WITH YOU, INSTEAD OF HER!
I - I'LL DO IT! I MUST!
2

THAT NIGHT, AS AMELIA HURRIED TOWARD THE CEMETERY, STORM CLOUDS OBSCURED THE MOON...
UNCLE SAYS A FEARFUL STORM IS ON THE WAY! I MUST HAVE EVERYTHING PREPARED TO GO TO THE CLIFF! WHILE CHRISTINE AND JOHN ARE AT THE DANCE, I WILL GO TO THE CEMETERY!
THIS ANCIENT PART OF THE CEMETERY WILL BE BEST! BURIED A HUNDRED YEARS, THERE SHOULD BE NOTHING LEFT BUT CRUMBLING SKELETONS! I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD HAVE COURAGE LIKE THIS, BUT TO HAVE BEAUTY, AND JOHN...
WHO DARES VIOLATE THE GRAVES OF THE DEAD?
WHO ARE YOU, GIRL? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
THE CARE-TAKER! WELL, I'VE COME THIS FAR--NOTHING'S GOING TO STOP ME NOW!
WONDERFUL, AMELIA! I COULDN'T HAVE DONE BETTER MYSELF! I KNEW YOU WERE JUST THE GIRL I WAS LOOKING FOR!
OW!
DICK TURNER! ONE OF MY VICTIMS! THAT WILL MAKE A WONDERFUL BONE TO STIR YOUR MIXTURE, AMELIA! HE LEFT HIS WIFE FOR ME, BUT WHEN HE FOUND OUT WHAT I WAS LIKE, HE TRIED TO LEAVE ME--AND I KILLED HIM!
I PUT POISON IN HIS WINE! NO ONE KNEW I DID IT. THEY CALLED IT A HEART ATTACK! THAT BONE FROM HIS ARM, AMELIA--THAT ARM THAT WAS AROUND ME SO OFTEN!
HER GRUESOME TASK ACCOMPLISHED, AMELIA STARTED BACK TO HER UNCLE'S HOUSE, JUST AS THE STORM BROKE OUT IN ALL ITS FURY...
IT MUST BE ALMOST TIME FOR CHRISTINE AND JOHN TO GET BACK FROM THE DANCE! CHRISTINE WORE HER PEARLS TONIGHT! I MUST FIND SOME WAY OF GETTING THEM--AND THE BLOOD--SO THAT I CAN GET TO THE CLIFF WHILE THE STORM RAGES, AS SATANA TOLD ME TO DO!
3

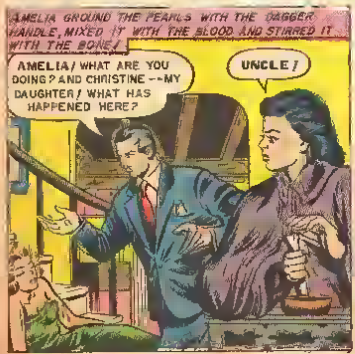

LAYING IN WAIT FOR HER COUSIN, IT ADDED FUEL TO AMELIA'S FURY TO SEE HER WITH HER LOVER...
GOOD NIGHT, DARLING! BE CAREFUL ON THE WAY HOME! THIS IS GOING TO BE A BAD STORM!
YOU COULD KILL HER NOW -- EVERYONE WOULD THINK A ROBBER BROKE IN AND DID IT!


MOMENTS AFTER JOHN HAD LEFT THE HOUSE
OHHHHHH!
WONDERFUL, AMELIA! HA! HA!

THE PEARLS!

AND THE BLOOD! HURRY, AMELIA -- WE MUST GET TO THE CLIFF!

BUT FIRST LOOK AT YOURSELF! DO YOU SEE THE CHANGE? WITH EACH DEED YOU HAVE DONE, YOU HAVE ABSORBED SOME OF MY BEAUTY! SOON YOU WILL BE AS BEAUTIFUL AS I AM!
YES -- YES -- I AM CHANGING!


AMELIA GROUND THE PEARLS WITH THE DAGGER HANDLE, MIXED IT WITH THE BLOOD AND STIRRED IT WITH THE BONE!
AMELIA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? AND CHRISTINE -- MY DAUGHTER! WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE?
UNCLE!

KILL HIM, AMELIA! DON'T LET ANYTHING STOP YOU NOW!

ONCE AGAIN AMELIA PICKED UP THE WOOD!

OHHHH!

CRACK

THEN THE MA[illegible] AMELIA THREW IT INTO THE STORMY NIGHT, CLUTCHING HER PRECIOUS AND EVIL CONCOCTION, COMPLETELY [illegible] THAT POSSESSED HER!

TO THE CLIFF, AMELIA! TO BEAUTY--TO LOVE--TO ALL THE THINGS YOU HAVE DESIRED!

MEANWHILE, JOHN MAILSTON'S CAR HAD STALLED ON THE WAY HOME.

THERE'S WATER IN MY MOTOR AND IT WILL NEVER DRY OUT IN THIS BLOWING RAIN! I'LL GO BACK TO THE KERR'S. WHY--THERE'S AMELIA! WHERE COULD SHE BE GOING, ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS?

SHE'S GOING TOWARD THE CLIFF AND SATANA'S STONE! SHE MUST HAVE GONE CRAZY! I'VE GOT TO STOP HER!

THE FORCE OF THE WIND ALMOST SWEPT JOHN AWAY, BUT HE CLUNG TO A ROCK AND WATCHED WITH HORROR THE STRANGE SCENE BEING ENACTED BEFORE HIM!

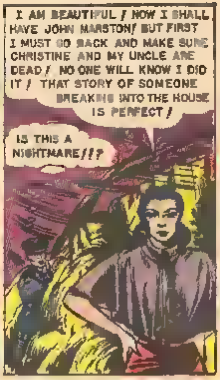
BLOOD AND PEARLS--STIRRED WITH DEATH! WASH YOURSELF IN IT, AMELIA, AND BECOME AS BEAUTIFUL AS I! FORCES OF EVIL--COME VIEW THE MORTAL BODY I HAVE CAPTURED TO HOUSE MY DOOMED SOUL!

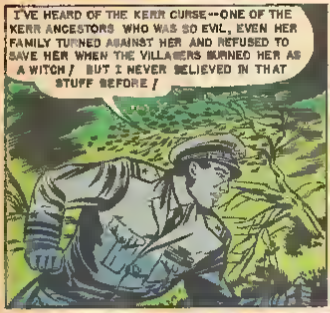
AS THE RAIN WASHED THE BLOODY MIXTURE FROM AMELIA'S FACE, A NEW AND EVIL BEAUTY WAS HERS, AND THE SHRIEK OF THE DEMONS SATANA HAD CALLED FORTH, SEEMED TO DROWN OUT THE WIND!

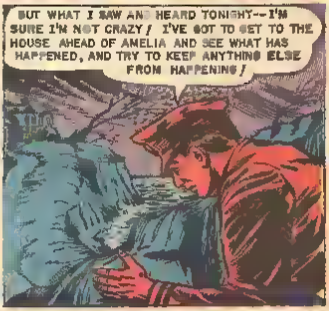
FROM NOW ON, WE SHALL BE ONE, AMELIA! THEY BURNED ME AS A WITCH AND SCATTERED MY ASHES TO THE WIND, BUT I SWORE TO THEM I WOULD COME BACK IN A NEW BODY AND DESTROY ALL THAT REMAINED OF THE KERR BLOOD AND FINISH OUT THE LIFE I LOVED SO DEARLY!

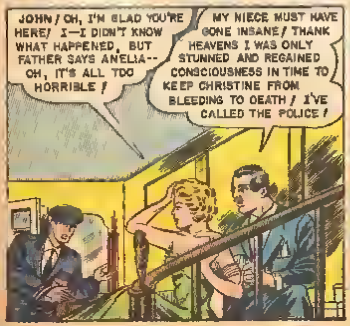
I NOW HAVE YOUR BODY-- YOU HAVE MY BEAUTY--OUR SPIRITS ARE MERGED AS ONE, BECAUSE INSIDE WE WERE ALIKE! NOW, ONLY WHEN YOU ARE DEAD, WILL MY INFLUENCE BE DESTROYED!

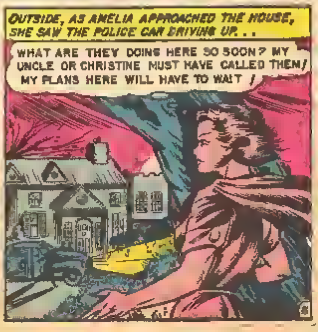
ONCE AGAIN MEN WILL THRILL TO MY BEAUTY! ONCE AGAIN I WILL KNOW HUMAN PASSION! I LIVE AGAIN!


I AM BEAUTIFUL! NOW I SHALL HAVE JOHN MARSTON! BUT FIRST I MUST GO BACK AND MAKE SURE CHRISTINE AND MY UNCLE ARE DEAD! NO ONE WILL KNOW I DID IT! THAT STORY OF SOMEONE BREAKING INTO THE HOUSE IS PERFECT!
IS THIS A NIGHTMARE!!?


I'VE HEARD OF THE KERR CURSE--ONE OF THE KERR ANCESTORS WHO WAS SO EVIL, EVEN HER FAMILY TURNED AGAINST HER AND REFUSED TO SAVE HER WHEN THE VILLAGERS BURNED HER AS A WITCH! BUT I NEVER BELIEVED IN THAT STUFF BEFORE!


BUT WHAT I SAW AND HEARD TONIGHT--I'M SURE I'M NOT CRAZY! I'VE GOT TO GET TO THE HOUSE AHEAD OF AMELIA AND SEE WHAT HAS HAPPENED, AND TRY TO KEEP ANYTHING ELSE FROM HAPPENING!


JOHN! OH, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE! I--I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, BUT FATHER SAYS AMELIA-- OH, IT'S ALL TOO HORRIBLE!
MY NIECE MUST HAVE GONE INSANE! THANK HEAVENS I WAS ONLY STUNNED AND REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS IN TIME TO KEEP CHRISTINE FROM BLEEDING TO DEATH! I'VE CALLED THE POLICE!


OUTSIDE, AS AMELIA APPROACHED THE HOUSE, SHE SAW THE POLICE CAR DRIVING UP...
WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE SO SOON? MY UNCLE OR CHRISTINE MUST HAVE CALLED THEM! MY PLANS HERE WILL HAVE TO WAIT!

BEAUTY IS WELCOME ANYWHERE! I CAN ALWAYS COME BACK HERE AND CONTINUE MY VENGEANCE, BUT NOW I MUST GET AWAY!

THERE SHE IS!

TRAPPED, AMELIA FELT HER NEW ASSURANCE SLIPPING AWAY. PANIC SEIZED HER AS SHE RAGE BACK TOWARD THE CLIFF.

I WILL CALL UPON THE FORCES OF EVIL AGAIN! THEY WILL NOT FORSAKE ME! HELP ME, FORCES OF EVIL! FROM THIS ROCK, SATANA USED TO INVOKE YOU! HELP ME!

AS JOHN WATCHED, AMELIA SEEMED TO PLUNGE BLINDLY OVER THE CLIFF. HE COULD NOT BE SURE WHETHER THE SOUNDS HE HEARD WERE MOCKING LAUGHTER OR THE WIND -- AND WHETHER THE FIGURES HE SEEMED TO SEE WERE MADE OF WIND AND RAIN!

YOU CHOSE YOUR OWN COURSE LONG AGO-- AND AGAIN TONIGHT! THERE IS NO HELP FOR SUCH AS YOU -- OR US!

GRRRRR

WE SAW HER JUMP! SHE'S DONE FOR, NOW!

YES --SHE'S DONE FOR!

LATER, AT THE KERR HOUSE...

THE VILLAGERS AND HER OWN FAMILY NAMED HER SATANA, BECAUSE OF HER MANY EVIL DEEDS, AND BECAUSE SHE WAS SAID TO PRACTICE WITCHCRAFT! SHE AND HER CURSE WERE SUPPOSED TO HAUNT THIS HOUSE, AND THE CURSE WOULD ONLY BE LIFTED WHEN THE LAST OF THE KERRS DIED!

AMELIA WAS ACTUALLY THE LAST OF THE KERRS! WHEN HER FATHER LEFT HOME, HATING THIS PLACE AND VOWING NEVER TO RETURN, HIS FATHER ADOPTED ME, GAVE ME THE KERR NAME, AND LEFT THE PLACE TO ME! AMELIA NEVER KNEW THAT CHRISTINE AND I HAD NO KERR BLOOD IN US, AND WERE NOT ACTUALLY HER RELATIVES!

AND SO, WHEN SATANA SWORE SHE WOULD COME BACK IN A NEW BODY AND DESTROY ALL THAT REMAINED OF KERR BLOOD, BECAUSE HER FAMILY TURNED AGAINST HER, SHE MADE THE CURSE COME TRUE. BUT IN DESTROYING AMELIA, SHE ALSO DESTROYED HER SELF, AS EVIL MUST ALWAYS DESTROY ITSELF! THERE, IN THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN, THE BODY OF AMELIA, WITH THE IMPRISONED, UNHAPPY SPIRITS OF AMELIA AND SATANA, REMAIN! END

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